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U.S. - Oman Free Trade Agreement Trade Capacity Building Workshop to be held at the Intercontinental Hotel in Muscat May 15 – 17

The U.S. Embassy in Muscat, along with the International Executive Service Corps and the Middle East Partnership Initiative, is organizing the U.S. - Oman Free Trade Agreement Workshop on "Trade Capacity Building" in cooperation with the Omani Center for Investment Promotion and Export Development, the Ministry of

Commerce and Industry, the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Muscat American Business Council. The workshop will be held from May 15 – 17 at the Intercontinental Hotel where International Trade Experts will provide in-depth training to assist firms on maximizing trade under the FTA. The three-day

workshop will cover various topics, including promoting your product and service in the U.S. market, identifying market trends and buyers in the U.S., improving business strategies for exporting to the U.S., incorporating technology in business: e-marketing in the U.S., and navigating customs regulations.

U.S. Embassy Supports the Fourth Annual Women in Business Conference 2010, April 25 – 26, 2010

Envent Oman, a female-owned Omani company, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry held the fourth annual Women in Business Conference on April 25 and 26. The U.S. Embassy – Muscat, as part of its broad commitment to promoting business development in Oman, and recognizing the vital role women play in the Omani economy, sponsored ten underprivileged Omani women to attend the event, provided business planning



Deputy Chief of Mission L. Victor Hurtado at the Fourth Annual Women in Business Conference 2010

materials, as well as commercial advice and resources to attendees. At the opening ceremony, the Embassy was represented

by Deputy Chief of Mission L. Victor Hurtado, as well as other members of the economic team.

Omani Entrepreneur Ali Daud Attends the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship in Washington

Ali Daud, CEO and director of Daud Sons International, LLC was invited to be Oman's delegate to the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship. Daud is also the president of the Muscat American Business Council, which works to enhance trade relations between U.S. and Oman. Daud believes that small and medium-sized enterprises form the backbone of the Omani economy. He sees larger business, such as his group of companies, playing a larger role in sparking small business growth in Oman by advising aspiring entrepreneurs and even providing them with capital.

The Summit was entitled *A New Beginning* and built on President Obama's speech in Cairo to the Muslim world on June 4, 2009. In his speech, the President had promised to host a summit on entrepreneurship to identify how we can deepen ties between business leaders, foundations, and social entrepreneurs in the United States and Muslim communities around the world.

The Summit, held April 26 and 27, brought together entrepreneurs, established businesspeople, and media stars from nearly 60 countries with sizable Muslim populations. At the Summit, the delegates celebrated the risky, exhilarating life of entrepreneurship and shared ideas about sparking new businesses in their communities. The entrepreneurs



Ambassador Richard J Schmierer presents entrepreneur Ali Daud with a copy of President Obama's book, *Dreams From My Father*

expressed hope that this entrepreneurial energy will create jobs, bring robust economic development, and drive other positive changes in their countries. Discussions about how entrepreneurs can become agents of change were at the center of the summit's agenda.

The Summit was also a forum where new U.S. initiatives on entrepreneurship in the Muslim world were announced, including the Global Entrepreneurship Program (GEP), new exchange programs focused on entrepreneurship, innovation, and science, the Partners for a New Beginning Program, the e-Mentor Corps,

the Secretary's International Fund for Women and Girls, and The Secretary's Innovation Award for Women and Girls. These new initiatives build on those already underway, such as a series of trade missions to the Middle East, led by U.S. officials, Commercial Law Development Program, activities focusing on corporate governance, insolvency and secured lending law, and trade capacity building programs focusing on countries, like Oman, with Free Trade Agreements.

Oman Holds Second Economic Forum

Oman held the Second Economic Forum on April 25 and 26, in Muscat. The Forum gathered together ministers and other government officials, CEOs and chairpersons from Oman's private sector, diplomats, journalists, and international businesspeople to hear about Oman's development plans and details on current projects al-

ready underway. The forum allowed attendees to ask pointed questions of the government officials, who at times provided very candid answers. Although the forum allowed for a frank discussion of economic matters, no initiatives were announced.

Rail Comes to Oman

Plans for the development of a national railway system in Oman have attracted mammoth interest from local and international companies looking to pre-qualify for two key contracts linked to the multi-billion dollar project. Nearly 100 companies and organizations have collected pre-

-qualification tenders by the May 12 deadline. The prequalification is for the Muscat-Sohar line, or Phase I. Phase II will go to the new port of Duqm, and Phase III will connect Sohar to the UAE, possibly Al Ain.

Muscat American Business Council Promotes Oman's Green Initiatives

On March 29, the Muscat American Business Council (MABC) organized a luncheon discussion on "How Green is Oman - A Highlight of Green Initiatives in the Country" at the Ramada Hotel. Eminent speakers from various fields participated in the discussion. James Hestad, of Haya Water, presented an overview on water recycling, Shaima Al Lawati, of Bank Muscat, provided information on the green building efforts at the new Bank Muscat Office, Sarah Hestad, an attorney focusing on energy issues, presented on carbon credits and environment laws, and Daren Mehdi from the Oman Botanical Garden provided information on Oman Botanic Gardens' efforts to promote green initiatives.



المجلس التجاري الأمريكي بمسقط
Muscat American Business Council

The MABC is a non-profit organization actively promoting trade relations between the U.S. and Oman.

UPCOMING EVENTS May 2010:

Electric Power 2010
(Power Generation)
Location: Baltimore, MD
Date: May 18-20, 2010

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Exporting Security and Defense Services: A Seminar on International Business
Location: Arlington, VA
Date: May 19, 2010

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National Restaurant and Hotel Show
(Food Processing/ Packaging Equipment)
Location: Chicago, IL
Date: May 22-25, 2010

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Wind Power 2010
(Wind Energy)
Location: Dallas, TX
Date: May 23-26, 2010

